Commercial wings of embassies

1566. SHRI RAHUL BAJAJ:

SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the steps that have been taken to improve the effectiveness of the commercial wings of our Embassies; and

(b) the additional business for Indian industry the Ministry created each year during the last three years?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI S. M. KRISHNA): (a) The Government has taken several steps to improve the effectiveness of the commercial wings of our embassies with a view to making them more responsive to the growing demands and expectations of business and industry. Additional funds have been placed at their disposal through various schemes such as the Market Expansion Activities budget and the Challenge Fund to enable them to undertake various promotional activities such as market surveys, seminars, workshops, buyer-seller meets, media campaigns, outreach activities, etc. with the aim of promoting trade and investment, expanding markets for Indian products and projecting brand India. Necessary support to commercial wings is also provided through information dissemination in the form of booklets and CD-ROMs containing updated data on various sectors of the Indian economy and Government policies, weekly and monthly bulletins, setting up of websites, etc.

(b) As trade promotion depends on a number of factors, it is difficult to quantify the additional business for Indian industry the Ministry created. However Indian Missions and Posts have contributed significantly to the growth of India's exports of goods and services. Indian industries have benefited from the activity of commercial wings in many ways including through dissemination of information related to export promotion and investment activities, market information, trade facilitation of visiting businessmen and delegations and help in resolving trade disputes.

Maritime boundary dispute with Bangladesh

†1567. SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the issue of maritime boundary dispute with Bangladesh has reached in United Nations; and

(b) if so, the efforts made by Government to solve the problems with neighbouring country through talks?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI S.M. KRISHNA): (a) and (b) Two rounds of bilateral talks on the demarcation of the maritime boundary between India and Bangladesh were held in September, 2008 and March, 2009. These were technical-level talks and the Indian delegation was

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi